

having been indebted to the kindness of Lord Tweeddale for the opportunity of examining a series of five specimens of this bird, I was struck with the considerable prolongation of the hooked point of the upper mandible, which appeared to me to be proportionally greater than in the other species of this genus. In one of these specimens this prolongation was so remarkable as to remind me of the similar but still more marked curvature and prolongation of the upper mandible in *Leptodon uncinatus* of tropical America.

Of the remaining species of the genus *Spilornis* (*S. holospilus*, *S. rufipectus*, and *S. sulaënsis*), I have nothing to add to Mr. Sharpe's remarks, except to observe that it seems to me that *S. sulaënsis* should, at most, be regarded only as a subspecies of *S. rufipectus*, from which, judging by the specimens of both preserved in the Norwich Museum, it only differs, either in its immature or in its adult stage, by its slightly smaller dimensions.

[To be continued.]

VIII.—Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.

1. 'Transactions' of the New-Zealand Institute.

Volume nine of the 'Transactions and Proceedings of the New-Zealand Institute,' which we have just received, contains the following five ornithological papers by Dr. Buller:—

(1) "On the Ornithology of New Zealand," p. 327. [Contains notes on various species, and adds *Diomedea cauta*, Gould, to the New-Zealand list.]

(2) "On the Occurrence of the Royal Spoonbill (*Platalea regia*)," p. 337. [Adds this Australian Spoonbill to the list.]

(3) "Observations on a Species of Shag inhabiting Queen-Charlotte Sound." [Relates to *Phalacrocorax finschi*, lately described by Mr. Sharpe.]

(4) "On a Tendency to Deformity in the Bill of *Nestor meridionalis*."

(5) "On the Alleged Intercrossing of *Ocydromus earli* and the Domestic Fowl."

With all deference to Dr. Buller, we put these stories on a par with the oft-repeated fable of the hybrids between the domestic duck and the fowl. That *Ocydromi* will tread hens if they get a chance, we do not doubt; but that their spermatozoa will impregnate the latter's eggs has, as yet, not been shown satisfactorily. Dr. Buller should obtain examples of the alleged produce for the dissecting-knife.

Besides Dr. Buller's papers the same volume contains :—“Remarks on Dr. von Haast's Classification of the Moas,” by Captain F. W. Hutton, Director of the Otago Museum (*ibid.* p. 363), which are worthy of attention; an account of “a Second Discovery of Moa-Bones at Hamilton,” by B. S. Booth (*ibid.* p. 365); some “Notes on the Occurrence of a Curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*, Vieillot) in New Zealand,” by Julius von Haast, Ph.D., F.R.S. (*ibid.* p. 427); and “Notes on the Antarctic Petrel (*Priocella antarctica*),” by James Hector, C.M.G., M.D., F.R.S. (*ibid.* p. 464).

2. Lawrence on New Birds from the Island of Dominica.

[Descriptions of new Species of Birds from the Island of Dominica. By G. N. Lawrence. Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci. i. pp. 46-49.]

We are glad to learn that an exploration of some of the least-known of the West-India Islands, for the purpose of elucidating their natural history, has been undertaken by Mr. Fred. A. Ober, of Beverly, Massachusetts, under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution. As yet his investigations have been confined to Dominica, whence two collections of birds have been received, and sent to Mr. Lawrence for determination.

In the present paper Mr. Lawrence describes three new species contained in the collection—namely *Thryothorus rufescens*, *Dendræca plumbea*, and *Myiarchus oberi*. Besides these novelties Mr. Ober obtained a series of *Thalurania wagleri*, hitherto supposed to be from “Brazil,” but which is probably peculiar to the island.

A complete list of the avifauna will be given when the rest of the collections are received. Mr. Ober is now gone on to Antigua.

3. *Ridgway on the genus Leucosticte.*

[Sexual, Individual, and Geographical Variation in the Genus *Leucosticte*. By R. Ridgway. Field and Forest, ii. Sept. 1876.]

Quantity of specimens we should have thought would at least have tended to produce unanimity of opinion as regards the specific value of obscure species of birds. But that this is not always the case is shown by the diverse views held by Mr. Ridgway and Mr. J. A. Allen upon the subject of the specific distinctions of the members of the genus *Leucosticte*, specimens of which by the hundred have been examined by both disputants. Though the species of *Leucosticte* are not unrepresented in our collections, thanks to the generosity of our American friends, we have not sufficient materials in this country to form an independent opinion on so delicate a point as to whether certain forms possess well-defined sexual differences or not. Mr. Ridgway seems to have gone very thoroughly into the subject; and so also has Mr. Allen; and we have no doubt the truth will be threshed out between them.

4. *Ridgway on the Birds of Guadalupe Island.*

[The Birds of Guadalupe Island discussed with reference to the present Genesis of Species. By R. Ridgway. Extracted from the Bull. of the Nuttall Orn. Club, ii. July 1877.]

This is an interesting paper inspired by a further consideration of the birds inhabiting the little island of Guadalupe, which lies off the coast of California. A visit to it by Dr. E. Palmer a short time ago brought to light a curious series of facts relating to its fauna and flora, the birds being found, though generically the same, to be all specifically different from their continental allies. Mr. Ridgway now examines the avifauna, after the plan adopted by Salvin in his recent memoir on the birds of the Galapagos Islands (Trans. Z. S. ix. p. 447 *et seqq.*), and comes to the conclusion that the immigration and differentiation of species in Guadalupe Island have been substantially the same as in the Galapagos archipelago, but that the process of change, either through shortness of time or slowness of operation, has not

gone so far as to produce genera distinct from their continental allies. As has been frequently asserted, the effect of a residence in an oceanic island upon birds is to increase the size of their bills and feet, to shorten the wings and tail, and to darken the colours; this rule applies strictly to the birds of Guadalupe Island. The change, as Mr. Ridgway points out, has not as yet proceeded far; but enough is seen to show that the law at work in most parts of the world is in action here also.

5. *Godwin-Austen on three new Species of Birds from Assam.*

[Description of three new Species of Birds of the Genera *Pellorneum*, *Actinura*, and *Pomatorhinus*, lately collected in the Neighbourhood of Saddya, Assam, by Mr. M. J. Ogle, of the Topographical Survey. By Major H. H. Godwin-Austen. J. A. S. B. xvi. pt. ii. p. 41 (1877).]

The three species here described are :—

(1) *Pellorneum pectoralis* (p. 41), from Saddya.—In his notes on this species Major Godwin-Austen refers to the vexed question of *Pellorneum tickelli*, Blyth; but his views here expressed are altered in his subsequent paper.

(2) *Actinura oglei* (p. 42): shot on Manbúm Tila, on the Tenga-Pani river, near Saddya, at an elevation of 800 feet.—The species is compared with *Turdinus guttatus*, Tickell, a bird which Major Godwin-Austen considers to be incorrectly placed in the genus *Turdinus*.

(3) *Pomatorhinus stenorhynchus* (p. 43): Manbúm Tila, on the Tenga-Pani river, near Saddya (800 feet).—This species has a slender bill approaching that of *Xiphorhamphus*, its coloration recalling *P. ferruginosus*.

In the same collection are other new species, the names of which are given here, but the description of which is reserved for a future paper.

6. *Godwin-Austen on some species of Pellorneum and Pomatorhinus, &c.*

[Some Notes on Birds of the Genera *Pellorneum* and *Pomatorhinus*, with a Description of a Variety of *Chleuasicus ruficeps*, Blyth. By Major H. H. Godwin-Austen. Proc. A. S. B. June 1877.]

In this paper Major Godwin-Austen gives the result of an examination of the type of *Pellorneum tickelli*, Blyth. He refers it to the genus *Alcippe*, and shows that the species is quite distinct from *P. subochraceum*, Swinh., to which it had been united. But on this question see Lord Tweeddale's paper, *Ibis*, 1877, p. 451, and Major Godwin-Austen's remarks, *postea*, p. 115.

The note on *Pomatorhinus* refers to *P. hypoleucus*, Blyth, var. (= *P. tickelli*, Hume), and to the bird described by Mr. Hume as *P. inglesi*, which seems doubtfully distinct from the true *P. hypoleucus*, of which the types are in the Calcutta Museum.

The *Chleuasicus* noticed by Major Godwin-Austen, having a black eyebrow, not present in Blyth's type of *C. ruficeps*, is considered a variety of that species, and is described under the name of *C. ruficeps*, var. *atrosuperciliaris*. The specimen is from Saddya, Assam.

7. *Harvie Brown on the Distribution of Birds in North Russia.*

[Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. ser. 4, vol. xix. p. 277, et vol. xx. pp. 1, 180, 494.]

These papers give an analysis of the distribution of Russian birds found north of 58° N. lat., the district being divided into two—a northern and a southern division. The data concerning the birds of the northern division are mainly derived from the author's and Mr. Seebohm's paper published in the volume of this Journal for 1876. For the data relating to the birds of the southern division a list of authorities is quoted.

Lists of the two sets of birds are given with columns attached filled in with symbols denoting the rarity or reverse of the birds observed, and other matters relating to their distribution and migration; and one of the chief objects of the paper is to endeavour to establish a kind of geographical nomenclature, which shall serve to reduce observations to a common notation, and thus render more easy and more certain generalizations on geographical distribution.

The attempt is a very laudable one; and the extreme difficulty of rendering the manipulation of the subject at once

accurate and concise will not, we trust, deter other ornithologists from following out Mr. Harvie Brown's suggestions. At the same time we cannot forbear expressing our dislike to the use of symbols for this kind of investigation, as being at once an extra tax upon the memory and too inelastic to be of much service in the long run.

Mr. Harvie Brown has worked out his subject with much patience ; and we hope that the knowledge that future observations will certainly modify, probably to a considerable extent, the conclusions he here draws, will not discourage him from following up his investigations.

8. *Barboza du Bocage's 'Ornithology of Angola.'*

[Ornithologie d'Angola. Ouvrage publié sous les auspices du Ministère de la Marine et des Colonies par J. V. Barboza du Bocage. Première partie. Royal 8vo, pp. 256. Lisbon: 1877.]

It is well known to students of West-African ornithology that Professor Bocage has long paid special attention to the birds of the Portuguese possessions in Africa, as is shown by the lists that have appeared from time to time in the '*Jornal de Sciencias da Academia de Lisboa.*' These lists were drawn up from collections made in Angola by Senhor Anchieta, who has worked industriously at the birds of that district for upwards of ten years.

Much additional knowledge of the birds of Angola has been derived from the labours of Mr. Monteiro, who for some time collected in that country. These and other materials Prof. Bocage has worked up into the present book, which thus forms a very complete *résumé* of the birds of Angola, and an important addition to the literature of African birds. Great care has been bestowed upon the compilation of the book. The synonymy and references are full, but not overloaded, as is too often the fashion, with useless references. On the contrary, these seem to have been selected with judgment for their bearing upon the special subject to which they apply. A full description (perhaps too full) of each species is given, and a paragraph containing the details of the distribution of every bird, and other matter.

As was to be expected, the greater part of the new species in the collections sent to Lisbon from time to time have already been described; but we notice three new names in this work, two of them applied to Swifts—*Cypselus toulsoni* (p. 158) and *C. finschi* (p. 156), the former from Loanda, the latter from Angola,—and one to a Shrike, *Dryoscopus neglectus*, from Angola and Damaraland. The latter bird has frequently been called *D. major* by writers on South-African ornithology. Four plates, drawn by Keulemans and prepared in this country, accompany this part, on which are figured *Crateropus hartlaubi* and *C. gutturalis* (pl. i.), *Platystira minulla* (pl. iii.), *Telephonus anchietæ* (pl. iv.), and *Gyps africanus* (pl. ix.).

This book, so far as Portugal is concerned, redeems the reproach that no ornithological work of importance has proceeded from the Iberian peninsula since the days of Azara. That it does so is a credit to Prof. Bocage and to the Government Office under whose auspices his work appears.

9. Dr. Brüggemann on Birds from S.E. Borneo.

[Ueber eine Vögelsammlung aus Südost-Borneo. Von Dr. F. Brüggemann. Abh. nat. Vereins zu Bremen, vol. v. p. 453.]

This is an account of a collection of birds sent to the Darmstadt Museum from Moera Teweh, in the interior of S.E. Borneo. There were 254 skins, referable to 93 species. Two species (*Hemilophus fischeri* and *Cyornis turcosa*) are described as new. But the prize of the collection was *Polyplectron schleiermacheri* (cf. Ibis, 1877, p. 494), of which fine and most distinct species a figure is now given.

The species called "*Batrachostomus stellatus* (Gould)," t. c. p. 456, Dr. Brüggemann has subsequently distinguished as *B. adspersus* (Ann. & Mag. N. H. ser. 4, vol. xx. p. 178, Sept. 1877).

10. Dr. Brüggemann on Birds from Celebes.

[Nachträgliche Notizen zur Ornithologie von Celebes. Von Dr. F. Brüggemann. Abh. nat. Vereins zu Bremen, vol. v. p. 464.]

This is a supplement to Dr. Brüggemann's former article on the same subject (Abh. nat. Ver. zu Bremen, v. p. 35),

and gives an account of new collections sent to the Darmstadt Museum from Celebes. Four species are thus added to the list; and the *Chalcophaps* previously mentioned as *C. stephani* is now designated *C. wallacii*, sp. nov. *Eudynamis melanorhyncha* is also added to the ornis of the Sanghir Islands.

11. Gould's 'Birds of New Guinea.'

[The Birds of New Guinea and the adjacent Papuan Islands, including any new species that may be discovered in Australia. By John Gould F.R.S. &c. Part V. Folio. London, 1877. Published by the Author, 26 Charlotte Street, Bedford Square, W.C.]

Mr. Gould's annual part of the 'Birds of New Guinea' contains, as usual, figures of many most interesting species, as will be seen by the subjoined list:—

Manucodia comrii.	Trichoglossus musschenbroekii.
— chalybea.	Psitteuteles rubronotatus.
Casuarus picticollis.	— subplacens.
— westermanni.	Loriculus aurantiifrons.
Monarcha kordensis.	Chalcites meyeri.
— melanonota.	Myzomela cruentata.
Geoffroyius simplex.	

12. Gould's 'Birds of Asia.'

[The Birds of Asia. By J. Gould, F.R.S. &c. Dedicated to the Honourable East-India Company. Part XXX. Folio. London: 1877. Published by the Author, 26 Charlotte Street, Bedford Square, W.C.]

The same may be said of the past year's number of the 'Birds of Asia,' which gives us portraits of the following species:—

Pitta cærulea.	Sarcophanops steerii.
— cucullata.	Oriolus chinensis.
Chalcites hodgsoni.	Carduelis orientalis.
— xanthorhynchus.	Parus elegans.
Lobiophasis castaneicaudatus.	Ægithalus flammeiceps.
Gallus sonnerati.	Dicaeum dorsale.
Chrysocolaptes xanthocephalus.	

Of these the second species of *Lobiophasis* and the rare and newly discovered *Sarcophanops* are of the greatest interest to ornithologists. We regret to see that Mr. Gould has been

misled into calling an Oriole only found in the Philippines *Oriolus chinensis* (cf. Tweeddale, P. Z. S. 1877, p. 760). This would indeed be a case of *lucus à non lucendo*!

13. *David and Oustalet's 'Birds of China.'*

[Les Oiseaux de la Chine. Par M. l'Abbé Armand David, M.C., Ancien Missionnaire en Chine, et M. E. Oustalet, Aide-Naturaliste au Muséum. Avec un Atlas de 124 planches. Paris: Masson, 1877.]

The name of Armand David is now familiar to zoologists as that of one of the most energetic and successful of the travelling naturalists of the present day; and the great feats that he has accomplished in China are well known to most of us. Of his narrative of his last expedition into the interior of that country we gave some account last year*; but we have now to notice a much more important work, in which M. David has had the assistance of M. Oustalet, the Ornithologist of the Jardin des Plantes. This is nothing less than a complete *résumé* of all the known birds of the Chinese Empire—a considerable undertaking, considering the number of species contained in the Chinese ornis, and one of great usefulness, looking to the way in which the literature concerning them is scattered about in various journals and periodicals.

By the exertions of our authors this is all now reduced into a uniform shape, or at all events correctly indexed; while an accompanying volume of plates (although the figures are not of the highest style of art) gives us portraits of most of the rarities that have lately been brought to light by the exertions of Père David.

The total number of species included in the present work as inhabitants of China is 807, of which 158 are likewise found in Europe, and about 249, so far as is hitherto known, are peculiar to China. Of each of these 807 species we have the principal synonyms, a short description, and the chief facts of its history indicated; so that the work will be a most useful one to students of the Chinese avifauna. The following species appear to be now described as new for the first time—

* See 'Ibis,' 1877, p. 117.

Herbivocula incerta (p. 246), *Locustella minor* (p. 251), *Suya parum-striata* (p. 259), *Oreopneuste affinis* (p. 257), *Corydalla kiangsinsensis* (p. 311), and *Uragus lepidus* (p. 359). Two new genera are instituted:—*Moupinia* (p. 219), type *Alcippe pæcilotis*, Verr.; and *Spelæornis* (p. 229), type *Pnoëpyga troglodytoides*, Verr. The new genera and species indicated in Père David's 'Journal de mon troisième Voyage' (cf. *Ibis*, 1877, p. 118) are also more perfectly described.

14. D. G. Elliot and A. Reichenow on the Ibises.

[Review of the Ibidinæ, or Subfamily of the Ibises. By D. G. Elliot. P. Z. S. 1877, p. 477 *et seqq.*

Systematische Uebersicht der Schreitvögel (*Gressores*), einer natürlichen, die Ibidæ, Ciconidæ, Phœnicopteridæ, Scopidæ, Balænicipidæ und Ardeidæ umfassenden Ordnung. Von Dr. Ant. Reichenow. J. f. Orn. 1877, p. 113 *et seqq.*]

There are few groups of birds which admit of more varied treatment as regards their classification than the Ibises. The characters by which each species is marked are in most cases so trenchant that they have been looked upon by many authors as of generic value; hence we find that almost as many generic titles have been proposed for the members of the family as there are species to put into them. Again, other writers, viewing these characters as of specific or at most of subgeneric value only, group the whole of the species under one or two genera. In the two papers now before us each of these two extreme views are propounded. Mr. Elliot is the exponent of the former, and places the 25 species of Ibises he recognizes in 19 genera; whilst Dr. Reichenow classes all under three generic heads (including *Platalea*).

As neither of these authors has done more than draw the characters of his genera from external sources (Mr. Elliot using little else than the distribution of the feathers on the head and neck when defining his genera), we cannot consider either classification by any means final, and we have yet to look for sound definitions of the genera of the Ibidinæ.

Of the 19 genera employed by Mr. Elliot, three are introduced as new. The species recently described by Dr. Oustalet as *Ibis gigantea* is called *Thaumatibis gigantea*. The same

author's *I. harmandi* is identified with Mr. Hume's *Geronticus davisoni*, and placed as *Graptocephalus davisoni*. The third genus proposed is *Lamprolaima*, with *L. olivacea*, Du Bus, as its type; this species is also figured (pl. li.).

Before leaving the genera we have one point to notice; and that is the application of the name *Falcinellus* by both authors, who attribute the first use of it to Bechstein (1802). A reference to Bechstein's work shows that that author called the Glossy Ibis *Numenius falcinellus*, and in no way employed the latter title in a generic sense. Failing *Falcinellus*, *Plegadis*, Kaup (Skizz. Entw. Gesch. p. 82, 1829), appears to stand next in order of date; and thus *Plegadis falcinellus* (L.) would be the correct name for the Glossy Ibis. As regards the synonyms of this species, Dr. Reichenow shows that *Scolopax rufa*, Scopoli, is an older title than *Numenius igneus* of Gmelin (Nov. Comm. Petr. 1771), and of course than *Numenius igneus* of the 'Systema Naturæ' of 1788, as Mr. Elliot gives it. Both authors are, we believe, right in referring the *Tringa autumnalis*, Hasselq., to this bird; and were it not that Hasselquist is not strictly binomial in his nomenclature, a claim might be set up for the adoption of *autumnalis* as the specific name of the Glossy Ibis, as the English edition of Hasselquist's 'Travels' bears the date of 1766, thus coming within the recognized pale.

We think Mr. Elliot in error in uniting the Australian *Ibis strictipennis* with *I. æthiopica*; for not only does geography reject such a view, but living birds in the Zoological Society's Gardens show characters which enable the two species to be recognized without fail, even by ordinary observers. Nor can we indorse Mr. Elliot's reasoning when he argues that a character possessed by a species only during the breeding-season, and not retained throughout the year, must therefore be considered as of no specific value.

Mr. Elliot gives us under each species a profusion of references, those under *Falcinellus igneus* filling up a page and a half. Still we miss some of the most important—such standard works as Burmeister's 'Systematische Uebersicht,' Pelzeln's 'Ornithologie Brasiliens,' and other books of equal

merit finding no place in the crowd. Yet it is to these works, especially the latter, that we owe in a great measure our knowledge of the distribution of South-American birds.

Dr. Reichenow's paper, as its title shows, treats also of several other families besides the Ibises ; but this portion we do not propose to notice, except to express our great regret that the system of changing every name that appears barbarous to our Teutonic brethren finds favour with Dr. Reichenow. So much has already been said on the subject in this Journal, that we need not do more than ask Dr. Reichenow what chance he seriously thinks the name *Ciconia dicrura*, which he has bestowed upon our old friend *C. maguari*, has of general acceptance.

15. *D. G. Elliot's Descriptions of new Species of Birds.*

[Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. ser. 4, vol. xx. pp. 169, 171, 404.]

In the current volume of the 'Annals' we find three short papers by Mr. Elliot, each containing a description of a new bird. The first (p. 169) relates to a supposed new species of *Lamprocolius* from the Gaboon, which is called *L. glaucovirens*. The type is in the Paris Museum, where Mr. Elliot had an opportunity of comparing it with Vieillot's type of *L. splendens*, its nearest ally.

The second speaks of a new species of Hornbill from the Congo, which Mr. Elliot proposes to call *Bucorvus pyrrhops*. The type is a living specimen in the Zoological Gardens at Rotterdam, Mr. Elliot's description having been chiefly drawn up from a coloured sketch of the head prepared for him by Mr. Keulemans.

In the last paper a new Humming-bird is described as *Amazilia lucida*, of which the habitat is "stated to be Columbia." In this paper Mr. Elliot expresses his opinion that the so-called genera *Pyrrhophæna*, *Erythronota*, *Saucerottia*, &c. are not really separable from *Amazilia* ; and in this view he is probably correct. But we cannot altogether concur in his opinion that colour alone should be rejected as a character for generic separation in the Humming-birds. The lines which divide the groups of Humming-birds are so fine, and

the characters which seem to point to evidently natural genera are so slight, that we are not in a position to reject arbitrarily any, whether based on colour or structure, that may serve our purpose. If the Trochilidæ are to be divided into any thing approaching the number of genera that have been proposed for them, we cannot afford to set aside any characters which, even if slight, have the merit of being definite.

IX.—*Letters, Announcements, &c.*

Mr. A. O. Hume sends us the following letter, and with it four skins of Indian birds for examination :—

GENTLEMEN,—The Marquis of Tweeddale recently addressed you a letter about *Pellorneum tickelli*.

I do not see that any advantage would result to ornithology from entering into any controversy with his Lordship ; but it is desirable that the distinctness or otherwise of the species referred to should be established.

I send you separately, for inspection, a specimen of what I identify as *P. tickelli*—a bird that occurs equally in Burmah and Assam. I trust you will kindly state, at the same time as you publish this letter, your views as to this supposed species.

There are a good many supposed species the validity or otherwise of which it would be satisfactory to determine. I venture to forward, for your inspection, specimens of three of these besides the *Pellorneum* ; and should you approve my proposals in this matter, I shall be glad to forward, from time to time, other specimens of similarly doubtful species.

A second species of which I send a specimen is *Trichastoma minor*, Hume, S. F. ii. 535, Oct. 1874. Is this identical with *Drymocathus fulvus*, Wald. Ann. & Mag. N. H. June 1875, 401, or with *Turdinus garoënsis*, Godw.-Aust. J. A. S. B. xliii. 160, pl. viii. 1874 (read May 6th, published —)? or is it possible that all three are the same? I may mention that this species is very variable in the extent of pale shafting to the feathers of the head, and in the colour of the lower parts,